

We claim

1. An apparatus to enable automatic release of a railway vehicle hand brake system from either side of such vehicle, said apparatus comprising:
 - (a) a source of fluid pressure engageable with such vehicle;
 - (b) a release cylinder operable by fluid pressure connected to a hand brake mechanism, such hand brake mechanism engageable with a brake system disposed on such vehicle;
 - (c) a valve means connected intermediate said source of fluid pressure and said release cylinder for causing said release cylinder to release such hand brake system;
 - (d) a first valve actuation means disposed on a first side of such vehicle and connected intermediate said valve means and said source of fluid pressure for causing said valve means to initiate communication of fluid pressure from said source of fluid pressure to said release cylinder; and
 - (e) a second valve actuation means disposed on an opposed second side of such vehicle and connected intermediate said valve means and said source of fluid pressure for causing said valve means to initiate communication of fluid pressure from said source of fluid pressure to said release cylinder.

2. An apparatus, according to claim 1, wherein said first valve actuation means and said second valve actuation means are pneumatic actuators.

3. An apparatus, according to claim 2, wherein said apparatus further includes a relatively small reservoir connected intermediate said source of fluid pressure and both said first valve actuation means and said second valve actuation means.

4. An apparatus, according to claim 3, wherein said apparatus further includes a check valve connected intermediate said source of fluid pressure and said relatively small reservoir.

5. An apparatus, according to claim 4, wherein said apparatus further includes a choke connected intermediate said source of fluid pressure and said check valve.

6. An apparatus, according to claim 4, wherein said relatively small reservoir has a capacity of about 80 cubic inches.

7. An apparatus, according to claim 5, wherein said choke has a diameter of about .006 inch.

8. An apparatus, according to claim 2, wherein said apparatus further includes a choke connected intermediate said valve means and both said first valve actuation means and said second valve actuation means.

9. An apparatus, according to claim 1, wherein said valve means and said first valve actuation means and said second valve actuation means are electrically operated and said apparatus further includes a power source.

10. An apparatus, according to claim 9, wherein said power source is a battery.

11. An apparatus, according to claim 10, wherein said apparatus further includes a relatively small reservoir connected intermediate said valve means and said source of fluid pressure.

12. An apparatus, according to claim 11, wherein said apparatus further includes a check valve connected intermediate said source of fluid pressure and said relatively small reservoir.

13. An apparatus, according to claim 12, wherein said apparatus further includes a choke connected intermediate said source of fluid pressure and said check valve.

14. An apparatus, according to claim 13, wherein said relatively small reservoir has a capacity of about 80 cubic inches.

15. An apparatus, according to claim 13, wherein said choke has a diameter of about .006 inch.

16. An apparatus, according to claim 9, wherein both said first valve actuation means and said second valve actuation means are electrical switches.

17. An apparatus, according to claim 1, wherein said source of fluid pressure has a capacity of about 3,500 cubic inches.